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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

March 27, 2018

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Chairman  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Brady:

A March 9, 2018 CNN report<sup>[1]</sup> notes that the Trump Organization claims to have voluntarily given \$151,470 to the federal Treasury in fulfillment of a previous promise to donate any profits from foreign governments back to the United States. While the Trump Organization claims that this donation represents all profits from foreign government patronage at Trump properties for the period beginning January 20, 2017 through December 31, 2017, the Trump Organization has refused to provide any details about the foreign sources of these funds, where the monies were initially spent, or proof that they represent the totality of foreign spending at Trump properties. Therefore, I request that you use the powers of your office to help bring forward such evidence.

As you know, Donald Trump was the first President since Richard Nixon to refuse to release his tax returns. In office, he has not fully divested himself from his businesses, despite holding 564 financial positions in domestic and foreign companies.<sup>[2]</sup> Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, the so-called Emoluments Clause, was codified to prevent the President from taking gifts and bribes from foreign governments. Trump's rejection of these founding precepts is bad enough, but Congress's refusal to conduct oversight of Trump and his family's business activities is worse.

We have many reasons to exercise that oversight, as there have been numerous reports of foreign governments hosting events and booking rooms at the Trump International Hotel in Washington D.C. in an apparent quest to curry favor with the Trump Administration. For example, the Kuwaiti Embassy threw its annual Independence Day party there in 2017, according to NPR.<sup>[3]</sup> A June 2017 Daily Caller report details how the Trump International Hotel received \$270,044 in payments tied to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from October 2016 through March 2017.<sup>[4]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/09/politics/trump-organization-treasury-department/index.html>

<sup>[2]</sup> [http://pdfs.opensecrets.org.s3.amazonaws.com/N00023864\\_2016\\_Pres.pdf](http://pdfs.opensecrets.org.s3.amazonaws.com/N00023864_2016_Pres.pdf)

<sup>[3]</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/02/25/517039323/kuwait-celebration-at-trump-hotel-raises-conflict-of-interest-questions>

<sup>[4]</sup> <http://dailycaller.com/2017/06/04/saudis-spent-270k-at-trump-hotel-in-lobbying-campaign-against-911-bill/>

hosting a conference at the property.<sup>[5]</sup> After the Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak stayed at the hotel in September, the Washington Post reported that the Trump Organization likely received hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue from the Prime Minister's delegation.<sup>[6]</sup>

There have also been reports of more widespread relationships between Trump's businesses and foreign actors. An investigation by USA Today in January 2018 found that the Trump Organization sold over \$35 million in real estate properties almost entirely to shell companies.<sup>[7]</sup> It is impossible to know who controls these entities and whether or not they represent foreign buyers or governments. In February 2018, a member of Trump's family took a highly publicized business trip through Asia, where he met with high-ranking Indian government officials while touting his family's businesses.<sup>[8]</sup> Now the Trump Organization claims to have given all profits from foreign interests back to the taxpayers, but Congress has done zero follow-up to substantiate these assertions.

As chairman of Congress's tax-writing committee, I have no question you would be deeply concerned by a U.S. President or his family potentially enriching themselves with cash bribes. Thankfully, we have at our disposal the tools to guard against this type of corruption through oversight hearings, subpoenaing relevant documents, and demanding witnesses provide sworn public testimony. Furthermore, under Section 6103(f)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code, we may obtain individual tax returns from the Internal Revenue Service for the committee's assessment.

I once again call on you to exercise all of these prerogatives, beginning with obtaining Donald Trump's tax returns, so that members of the Ways and Means Committee can determine if Trump is using his office to reap profits for his family.

In highlighting the importance of transparency, Justice Louis D. Brandeis said, "sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants; electric light the most efficient policeman." To ensure that the integrity of our government remains beyond reproach, let us provide that sunlight together.

Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

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<sup>[5]</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/03/21/520183360/at-trumps-d-c-hotel-a-u-s-turkey-relations-conference-stirs-up-ethics-questions>

<sup>[6]</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/from-trump-hotel-lobby-to-white-house-malaysian-prime-minister-gets-vip-treatment/2017/09/12/1b296f54-97d1-11e7-87fc-c3f7ee4035c9\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.8d8e906df55a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/from-trump-hotel-lobby-to-white-house-malaysian-prime-minister-gets-vip-treatment/2017/09/12/1b296f54-97d1-11e7-87fc-c3f7ee4035c9_story.html?utm_term=.8d8e906df55a)

<sup>[7]</sup> <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/01/10/trumps-secretive-real-estate-sales-continue-unabated/1018530001/>

<sup>[8]</sup> <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/2/21/17031706/donald-trump-jr-india-conflict-of-interest>